

PRESS RELEASE

22 February 2011

Bereaved Dad of Four Runs London Marathon in memory of his Children and to Raise Money for Sands

Sunday 17th April 2011 will see Paul Woods, of Rothwell, Leeds pounding the streets of London running as one of Sands (the stillbirth and neo-natal death charity) nominated runners in this year's Virgin London Marathon.

Paul will be running London Marathon in memory of his four children – Liam who was stillborn at 24 weeks in 1989; Nathan who was stillborn in October 1992 at 40 weeks, and twins, Nicola and Natalie, who were born in July 1993 and tragically died a month later.

Paul, aged 47 says, 'Thanks to Sands my children are buried in a communal grave at Harehills Cemetery here in Leeds. Sands helped us so much at such a devastating time in our lives and I just hope I can raise as much money as possible for such a worthy cause.'

Paul and his wife, now have a young son, Callum aged 4.

Paul continues 'This will be my second London Marathon and I'm aiming to raise as much money as possible for Sands, which supports anyone affected by the death of a baby and promotes research to reduce the loss of babies' lives. The scary thing is, every day in the UK 17 babies are stillborn or die in the first few weeks of life but when it happens to you it feels as though you're the only people to suffer such a tragedy.'

Sands' Why17? campaign was launched in June 2008 to increase awareness of the fact that 17 babies die every day in the UK (10 are stillbirths, 7 are neonatal

deaths) totalling almost 6,500 baby deaths a year - the equivalent of 16 jumbo jets crashing every year with no survivors.

To find out more, please visit: www.why17.org or www.uk-sands.org

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For further information, please contact Sands press officers:

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or
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Key Information about Sands:

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was established by bereaved parents in 1978 and obtained charity status in 1981.

Sands core aims are to:

- Support anyone affected by the death of a baby;
- To work in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families; and
- To promote research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies' lives

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Sands Why 17? Campaign:

Sands Why17? Campaign asks a simple question. Why in spite of medical advances, do 17 babies die every day in the UK? For some of these deaths we simply do not yet know enough to be able to say why. Further research is needed.

The Facts today:

- 17 babies die every day in the UK (10 are stillbirths, 7 are neonatal deaths) totalling almost 6,500 baby deaths a year - the equivalent of 16 jumbo jets crashing every year with no survivors.
- This is four times the number of people who die every year of MRSA (1,593 MRSA deaths in 2007, UK Statistics Authority).
- This is double the number of adults who lose their lives on Britain's roads every year (2007 – 2,940 people were killed on the roads, Department of Transport).

- Ten times more babies are stillborn than die of cot death every year in the UK.
- The stillbirth rate has remained almost unchanged in the UK for the past 10 years. (CEMACH)
- Stillbirth is when a baby is born dead after 24 completed weeks of a pregnancy
- Neonatal death is when a baby is born alive but dies within the first 28 days of life

But increasingly, Sands believes that many of these deaths are potentially avoidable. The devastating impact of the death of a baby on the parents and their families and friends could be prevented.

What is needed is better antenatal care, increased funding for maternity services, more midwives and increased funding for research.

Sands Why17? Campaign is seeking to raise £3million over the next 5 years to;

1. Focus public awareness on why, tragically, 17 babies a day in the UK are stillborn or die within the first twenty eight days of life;
2. Promote changes in antenatal practice that could prevent babies from dying;
3. Identify and support key research which could provide further information on why so many babies are dying